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Banned Russian's New Novel

By Anatole Shub

PARIS—A new novel by Soviet writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn, holder of the Nobel Prize, was published here yesterday after having been banned by the censors in Moscow.

The 570-page book, entitled "August 1914: Part One" and published in Russian, was copyrighted in the author's name and contains a postscript purportedly written by Solzhenitsyn last month, especially for the "Russian Edition Abroad, 1971."

If the copyright and postscript are authentic, which could not be immediately confirmed, this would be the first case in which Solzhenitsyn expressly authorized publication of any of his works abroad that had not been published in the Soviet Union.

Since 1963, when his works last appeared in Russia, the writer has never been known to authorize any foreign publication. Books like "The Cancer Ward" and "The First Circle" appeared abroad without authorization.

The reason that Solzhenitsyn had hitherto avoided authorizing foreign publication was that, under the Brezhnev leadership in Russia, such publication had become a crime. In 1963, Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuri Daniel were sentenced to concentration camp terms because of works published abroad (under the pseudonyms of "Abrams Tertz" and "Nikolai Arzhak," respectively). When "The Cancer Ward" and "First Circle" did appear abroad, friends of Solzhenitsyn feared that the manuscripts had been made available to Western publishers by the Soviet se-

cret police in the hope of framing him on charges similar to those used against Sinyavsky and Daniel.

If publication here yesterday of "August 1914" has indeed been authorized by Solzhenitsyn, this would indicate that the 52-year-old novelist is now willing to risk trial by the Soviet authorities. Solzhenitsyn, whose first book published in Moscow was personally sponsored by former Communist leader Nikita Khrushchev, was expelled from the Soviet Writers Union in 1969 and last year was prevented from accepting the Nobel Prize.

Solzhenitsyn became the most widely admired—and controversial—writer in Soviet Russia with publication in 1962 of "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich," the first Soviet work to deal with life in Stalinist concentration camps. The author drew on personal experience. A Red Army hero in World War II, he was arrested in 1945 for criticizing Stalin and spent 12 years at forced-labor in Central Asia and the Moscow region.

Solzhenitsyn became the symbol of opposition to Brezhnev's attempt at re-Stalinization with a bold open letter to the Soviet Writers' Congress in May, 1967, demanding the end of all censorship in Russia. Although officially ostracized, he enjoys warm sympathy among leading Soviet intellectuals. The cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, at whose home in the Moscow suburbs Solzhenitsyn resides, was officially reprimanded last year for a public statement condemning the refusal to permit Solzhenitsyn to accept the Nobel Prize.

"August 1914" was published here under the imprimatur of the Y.M.C.A. Press, founded in 1921 by Dr. John Mott of the Young Men's Christian Association. The press has over the years published numerous books in Russian by such authors as the late Nobel laureate

Ivan Bunin, philosopher Nikolai Berdyayev, and Vladimir Nabokov. The Solzhenitsyn novel was prepared for publication by a French affiliate of the press, Editions Reunis, which has operated here since 1946. Jean Morozov, director of Editions Reunis, said that the first printing of "August 1914" was 20,000 copies. He declined to say, however, how the manuscript had reached the West.

The "Postscript to the Russian Edition Abroad, 1971" signed by Solzhenitsyn says that "This book cannot be printed in our motherland, except in Samizdat"—that is, through the underground circulation of typewritten manuscripts. The postscript blames the situation solely on the censors, who allegedly went so far as to insist that the word "God" be printed without a capital "G." The postscript partly remarks that even minor Soviet institutions merit at least one capital letter, while the KGB (the secret police) rates three. Besides, the postscript notes, it would be historically false to the people of 1914 to render God without a capital "G."

The postscript goes on to appeal to Russian readers abroad for any published material they might have concerning the major figures and places of his novel—which deals with the first 10 days of war on the Russian front with East Prussia in August, 1914, a dramatic period in which the Russian armies first advanced, then were crushed by Hindenburg and Ludendorff at the Battle of Tannenberg. Many Russian writers have been known to believe that the defeat of 1914 was the crucial event in their country's recent history—opening the way to revolution, civil war, terror, and permanent dictatorship.

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